

A N
E P I S T L E
F R O M
S A P H O to *PHILENIS*.
W I T H T H E
D I S C O V E R Y;
O R,
P A R A D I S E R E V I E W ' D.

Omnia vincit Amor----

Virg.

*----Ob! quis me geledis sub montibus Hæmi
Sistat, & ingenti Ramorum protegat Umbrâ.*

Virg.

L O N D O N:

Printed for W. TROTT, at the *Seven Stars* in *Russel-Court*
by *Drury-lane*; and Sold by the Bookellers of *London*
and *Westminster*, 1728.

(Price Six-Pence.)

Cup. 404. b. 38.

EPISTLE

TO THE READER

DISCOVER

THE READER

THE READER

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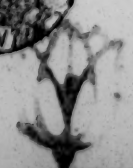
THE READER

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AN
E P I S T E

FROM

SAPHO to PHILENIS.

The ARGUMENT.

SAPHO was a famous Poetess, of a very amorous Disposition; who not contented with Male Lovers only, had also those of her own Sex; of whom this Philenis is suppos'd to have been the Principal; to whom (being by some Means parted from her) she sends this Epistle, in which she first declares her Grief and Love, and extols the other's Beauty; then tells her of the Harmony of Disposition, and Likeness that are between them, and of the Satisfaction and Security they might possess in communicating their Affections: then produces some Instances of the Power of Imagination in Love; and at last intreats her Presence, as a Means to suppress the Torment she sustains by her Absence, and consummate her Felicity.

The whole is supposed to be the natural Result of a ripe Invention, and a luxurious and violent Inclination.

SAPHO to PHILENIS.

WHERE is th' asswaging Pow'r that Verse is said
 To have? Is its enchanting Force decay'd?
 Or have my *Tears* quench'd my Poetick Fire?
 Oh! then why quench they not, as well, *Desire*?
 Their eager Course my *Thoughts* and *Wishes* bend
 To Thee, as all things to the Centre tend!
 Yet, tho' in cruel *Absence* plac'd, I find
 Thy dearest Form still recent in my Mind;
 Thy gracious Image yet do's there remain,
 Greiv'ous alike to lose, or to retain!
 That tells how fair thou art; thou art so fair,
 Only with Thee can *Goddeesses* compare;
 Such, such alone can please to that Degree,
 Are only to be known, compar'd with Thee.
 If Nature's curious Works unfashion'd *Men*
 We call, What's thy Denomination then?
 Thou art not soft as *Zephyrs*, strait and fair
 As *Cedars*, or unfading *Lillies* are;
 But so compleat in each peculiar Part,
 In Nature Thou thy only Rival art!
 Thy Form (that all things but itself transcends)
 All that is amiable comprehends!
 Not *Harmony* itself is more divine,
 Scarce all the Graces of th' immortal *Nine*
 Can triumph o'er the Sense and Soul like thine.

Yet *Lovers* swear (but oh! they swear too much)
 That I my self, but for my Grief, were such;

Tho'

Tho' less I grieve, lest envious Grief remove
 My Charms, and then (wretched indeed) I prove
 Unpriz'd by Thee, unworthy of thy Love.
 While at thy soft Retreat, in gentle Play,
 Thou passest thy successive Hours away;
 Is some egregious Youth thy chosen Dear?
 The Bliss is hazardous, and insincere;
 His Chin, which roughens with increasing Hairs,
 Harsh Courtship and robustous Change declares;
 Thou, lovely thou! art Nature's Paradise,
 Where, unmanur'd, transporting Pleasure lyes,
 Sufficiently compleat; why should'st thou then
 Admit the Tillage of robustous Men?
 Men leave behind what do's their Harshness show,
 And may be trac'd like Thieves who rob in Snow;
 But no more Signs our Dalliances declare,
 Than Fishes leave in Seas, or Birds in Air;
 And all Delight between Us may be had,
 All all that Nature yields, or Art can add.
 No Qualm of Body or of Mind succeeds,
 Or harsh Regret, our pleasurable Deeds;
 No nine Months growing Load We thus sustain,
 Nor is our Sport o'erpaid by following Pain;
 Dull Brutes are prone to propagate their Kind,
 But ours are Joys more prudent and refin'd.

To my fair *Genius* has indulgent Heav'n
 A Form not unproportionable given;
 Which tho' far less accomplish'd, less divine,
 Inferiorly is suitable to thine;
 Altho' in Worth and Lustre different, We
 Like Gems, in Silver well enchac'd, agree;
 Beside, a mut'al Harmony We find,
 A just Equality of Age and Mind;
 We both are to the same Desires inclin'd;
 We both are in our Youth's and Beauty's Prime,
 Nor feel as yet the with'ring Blast of Time;
 We both alike, in some peculiar Parts,
 Exceed the Carver's and the Painter's Arts;

Seem

Seem equal Proofs of Nature's Skill, and made,
 Of Beauty thou the Substance, I the Shade!
 Black as the Raven, or the Gloom of Night
 Our *Hairs*, our *Eyes* are as serene as Light,
 And quick as Thought's most voluntary Flight;
 Our *Skins* are white as undissolving Snow,
 Our *Waists* are slender, and our Statures low.
 Each Part of Me varies from those of You,
 Scarce more than they from one another do.
 Dear other self! the Likeness being such,
 Why may they not alike, and freely touch?
 None *Hand* to *Hand*, or *Lip* to *Lip* denies;
 Why shou'd they *Breast* to *Breast*? or *Th---s* to *Th---s*?

All animated Beings seek Delights,
 And, as they know, indulge their Appetites;
 But We, whose Inclinations are the same,
 Of noblest Sense, shou'd most Indulgence claim:
 The most exalted Pleasures are convey'd
 To us, by kind Imagination's Aid;
 This heightens all the Present we pursue,
 In gen'rous Bounty does the Past renew,
 And ev'n the Future opens to our View!
 Oft' too this do's from small Occasions raise
 Its Force, as Sparks augment into a Blaze;
 Thro' this, in Absence I enjoy the Grace
 To languish often in thy soft Embrace;
 Thro' this we oft renew our pleasing Game,
 Tremble and pant, dissolve in mutual Flame,
 And jointly do--- what I forbear to name!
 But oh! the joint Resemblance that we bear,
 Claims of my Thoughts the most continual Share;
 How shall I tell what Pleasure here I take,
 Me to my self how dear I often make,
 How grac'd and welcome for thy lovely Sake?
 My Fancy so is by Resemblance caught,
 Touching my self, Thee, Thee I touch in Thought;
 Each Part I gently first salute, and Thee
 Then thank--- for the delicious Courtesy;

Thee

Thee in my Glafs I call Me; but alas!
 Tears dimn my Eyes, my Sighs obscure the Glafs;
 These make th' Idea instantly decay,
 And drive, as soon as shewn, the soothing Form away.

Oh! cure this Loving Madness, I implore,
 And Me to my unhappy Self restore;
 Come my *Philenis*! come, nor let me find
 Thee less than my Imagination kind!
 Oh! let us, oh! with Expedition meet,
 To make my Joys most lasting and compleat;
 For tho' Delight is oft' my Fancy's Theam,
 I wake with Anguish from the golden Dream;
 Thy Presence only yields a full Content,
 And makes it both sincere and permanent:
 Come then, I say, and crown my ardent Hope,
 Thou, of my Bliss the full and utmost Scope!
 So may thy *Cheeks* the blushing Morn excel,
 So may thy fragrant *Breath* compleatly tell
 What Odours in the blest'd *Arabia* dwell;
 So may thy dear transcending *Beauty* move
 Our Sex's Envy, Men's eternal Love;
 And so be Change and Sickness far from Thee,
 As thy Approach will keep them far from Me.

F I N I S.



